

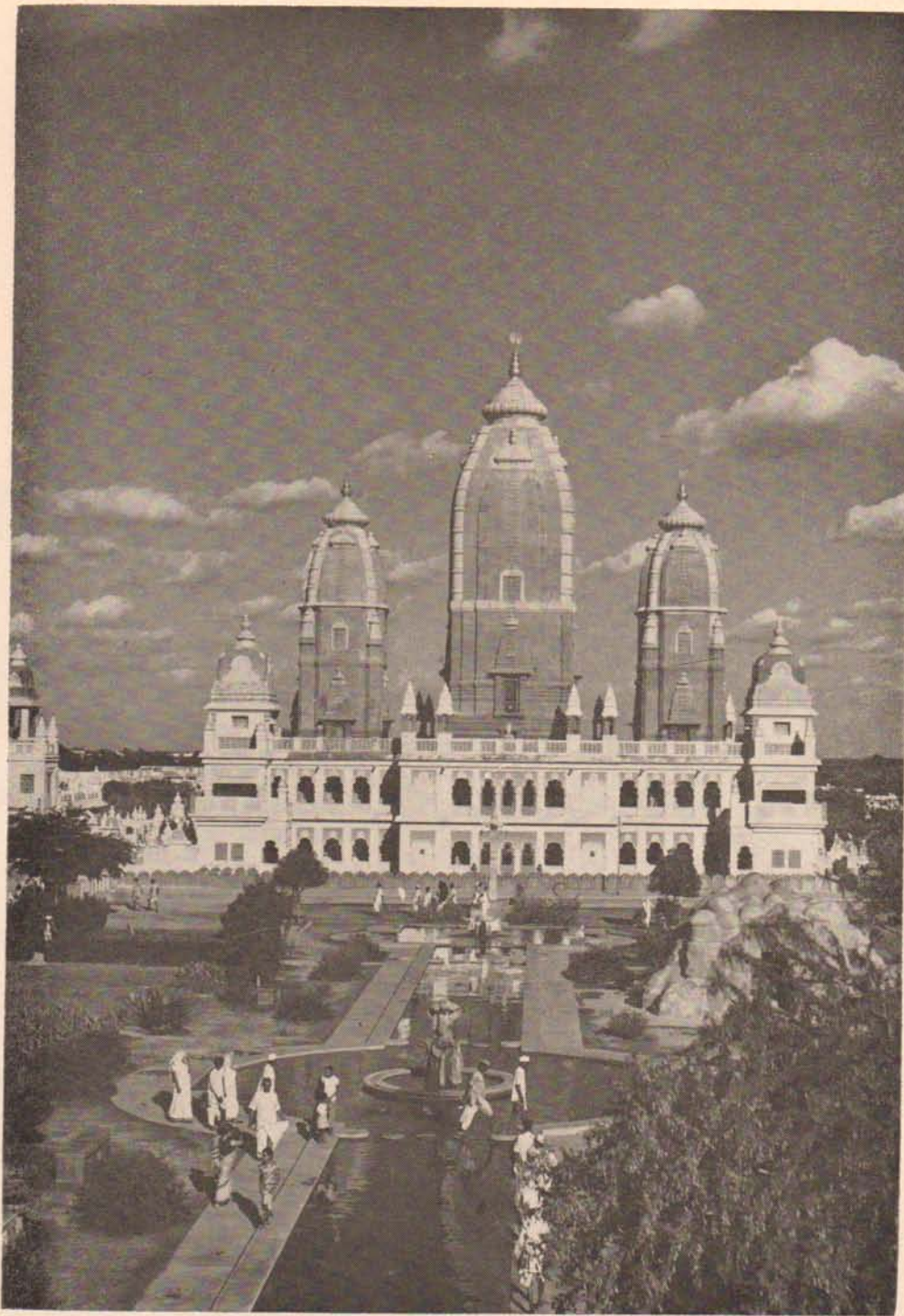
Ex-CBI Roundup

—CHINA—BURMA—INDIA—



**APRIL
1957**





IMPRESSIVE BIRLA TEMPLE at New Delhi. Photo taken of south side gardens surrounding the building. Photo by Paul Burge.

EX-CBI ROUNDUP

CHINA · BURMA · INDIA

Vol. 11, No. 4

April, 1957

Ex-CBI ROUNDUP, established 1946, is a reminiscing magazine published monthly except AUGUST and SEPTEMBER at 1650 Lawrence St., Denver, Colo., by and for former members of U. S. Units stationed in the China-Burma-India Theatre during World War II. Ex-CBI Roundup is the official publication of the China-Burma-India Veterans Association.

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Letter FROM The Editor . . .

● We cannot help but admire CBIVA National Commander Phil Packard who is doing a superb job under overwhelming odds. Packard has been ill with a liver virus nearly since the day he took office at the Houston Reunion last August. He has been hospitalized several times in the past six months, yet has found the time to do much travel in connection with CBIVA activities. Most of his messages, which appear on Page 30, were written in longhand from his hospital bed.

● Our two-month "clearance sale" for the Bazaar of India has cleared out much of our older merchandise. Now we are featuring in this month's ad on back cover some new items which we have stocked in quantity.

● Since it was necessary to cancel our second 'round-the-world tour to India due to the Middle East Crisis, we have received several letters urging that we sponsor a low-cost CBI-er's tour of Europe this year. It's rather late to be planning such a tour for this year but we may sponsor such a tour for late Spring of 1958 if enough are interested. How about you?

● Because there will be no Roundup issued for August and September, the final issue before the annual CBI Reunion at Detroit will be July. We again look for a record attendance and hope many of those who have yet to make a Reunion will be able to join us this year.

● Cover photo shows troops of the First Chinese Regiment, 5332nd Brigade, operating with tanks at Kubani, Burma. They are following in the tracks of the First Provisional Tank Group, Mars Task Force. Photo Jan. 27, 1945, by U.S. Army.



'Burma Air Victory'

● Thanks for printing "Burma Air Victory" in the March issue. I was a member of Eastern Air Command and once owned the little booklet which contained the story. These articles help us to remember the things we want to recall, and to remind us of how fortunate we are to be Americans.

HOWARD SECREST,
Liberal, Kansas.

Calcutta Banyan

● Don't know when I've read so interesting an article on what would seem to be a dry subject, as "Banyans" (Mar.). I surely had no idea a Banyan tree grew so large, and I guess I missed the opportunity to see the great Banyan while in Calcutta.

MAX I. PERLMUTTER,
Chicago, Ill.

Magician Platt

● Holy cow!! Last year I saw John Platt, the Magician, perform at Chicago's LaSalle Hotel and even had a short talk with him afterward, but never knew he did such a wonderful job of entertaining CBI-ers overseas until I read the story in the March issue.

JULIUS R. BLOCH,
New York, N. Y.

209th Combat Engineers

● We saw Edward R. Morrow's telecast, "See It Now," on Burma, Feb. 3rd. Especially enjoyed the interview with our Dr. Seagrave . . . A friend dropped by a few days ago and showed us a book entitled, "Diary of Company B." This was Company B of the 209th Combat Engineers. We were wondering if anyone could tell us how and where we could get a copy?

JAMES C. MYERS,
Minneapolis, Kans.

APRIL, 1957

Englishman Writes

● I received with considerable pleasure the August 1956 issue of Ex-CBI Round-up, sent to me by Bob May of the 3402nd Ordnance Co., and Bob directed my attention to Boyd Sinclair's article on page 8, "The Wheel Turners." I met the 3402nd when they were at Deolali and there formed a friendship with Bob May which has lasted through correspondence to the present. The story, as told in Round-up, brought back many memories. I shall always remember them for their strange forms of physical training, called, I think, "calisthenics," for their fine quality tropical kit, and for their almost boyish enthusiasm for the bazaar and Chinese restaurants of the small shopping area of Deolali. The tea wallahs mentioned in the article brought back another nostalgic memory. I do hope the 3402nd had the same form of inspection as that observed in the British Royal Artillery Depot, for on many occasions the



ASSAM AIR LINES, serving GI bases in Upper Assam. Operating out of Soakerating, this lone C-47 constituted the "airline." In above photo, pilots of the outfit are leaving for the U.S. Photo by Millard Webb.

tea wallahs' so-called tea had to be thrown away as unfit for human consumption. If I may turn from the Wheel Turners, I would congratulate you on your excellent magazine which even an Englishman found full of interest. The photo of the B-25 inside the front cover brought back another memory of my later days with the 14th Army seeing them above us enroute for Rangoon. I would enjoy seeing any CBI-er who would chance to come to England.

CECIL W. L. PRIME,
Leyswood, Deal,
Kent, England.

FELIX A. RUSSELL

Patent Lawyer
MEMBER OF
General Stilwell Basha
Record of Invention Forms
FREE UPON REQUEST
Colorado Building
Washington, D.C.



CONVOY WITH supplies bound for China, including tanks, bivouacked at Namhkam, Burma. Photo by Wm. F. Moerk.

Seeks Hump Pilots

● Made my first Hump flight as a radio operator in Oct. 1943 with Flight Sergeant Jim Blythe and Lt. Ken Arnette, a former civilian airline pilot. We carried no parachutes and an old Springfield rifle for armament. Does anyone know the present whereabouts of these two men?

FRANK A. HEFNER,
Morley, Mich.

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The Roundup

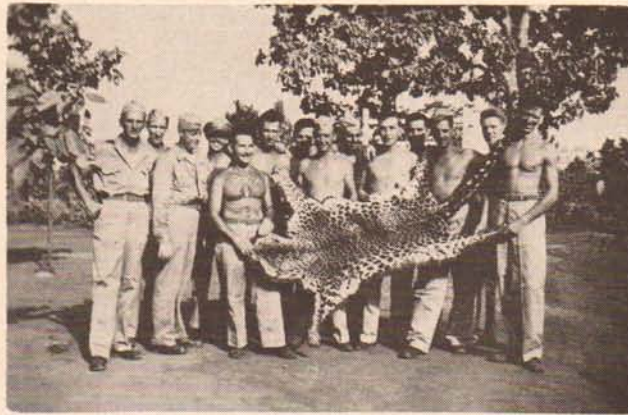
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EX-CBI ROUNDUP

St. Louis Basha

● The St. Louis Basha has completed not only a very successful but also a most eventful year. To close out 1956 we held our annual Christmas party at which 28 children and 27 adults greeted Santa's helper, Al Meyer. To start the New Year, on Jan. 26th we held a very joyous installation banquet-dance attended by over 60 persons, at which our guest speaker was the U. S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri, Harry Richards. At this installation the following sahibs took office for the ensuing year: Isadore Pearlstein, Commander; Joe Fenaja, Vice-Commander; Tom Staed, Adjutant; David Dale, Finance Officer; Cliff Davis, Service Officer; Albert Meyer, Chaplain; Martin Geisz, Historian; Norbert Ortwerth, Provost Marshal; Erwin Steidemann, Public Relations and yours truly, Judge Advocate. Being aware of the wonderful times we've had together and those we anticipate for this year, with the help of our ladies, we sincerely feel that any CBI-er in the St. Louis area who hasn't joined us, has missed the fun and comradeship that would be difficult to duplicate elsewhere.

HAROLD KRETCHMAR,
Maplewood 17, Mo.



MICHIGAN GI'S of the 1875th Engineers and their leopard trophy. Photo at Tingkaw Sakan, Burma, by Wm. F. Moerk.

CBI Nurse Killed

● If no one has already written you, I have just received word of the death of Katherine Edmondson, 34, who was a nurse with the hospital in Calcutta. She was killed in a freak accident just last week.

MARGARET MYERS,
Ithaca, N. Y.

Mrs. Lewis A. Pick

● I want to tell you what a wonderful job you did, writing about General Pick in your recent issue (Feb.) of Roundup. It was wonderful and I will cherish my copy very much and keep it always.

Mrs. LEWIS A. PICK,
Auburn, Ala.

Flier Opposed to Flying

● "He'd Rather Walk" (Mar.) gave me quite a laugh, but speaking of fellows opposed to flying . . . Col. Hill's George didn't know when he was well off. I had a radio operator on my C-46 who just hated to fly and was frightened each time he climbed into the plane. Yet he made at least 33 round trips over The Hump before the C.O. finally got him a transfer to the Signal Corps, on the ground.

JOHN LEE COOPER,
Sarasota, Fla.

Cincinnati Basha

● Results of the election of officers for the Cincinnati Basha, held Feb. 6th at the Sheraton-Gibson Hotel, follow: Joseph Herman, Jr., Commander; Robert Winsted, Sr. Vice Commander; Wm. D. Clyde, Jr. Vice Commander; Gilbert Steinau, Adjutant-Finance Officer; Winfield Burke, Judge Advocate; Nicholas Keating, Provost Marshal; Robert Runck, Service Officer; Harold Dibble, Public Relations; Wilfred Woodiviss, Chaplain; and Mary L. Stone, Historian. Next meeting will be held March 3, 2 p.m., at the Sheraton-Gibson Hotel in Cincinnati.

WINFIELD BURKE,
Chillicothe, Ohio.



FAVORITE PASTIME for residents of the Bengal Air Depot at Titagar was a spot of wild boar hunting on weekends. Photo by Ed Belford.

MERRILL'S MARAUDERS

By Charles Ogburn, Jr.

Reprinted from January 1957 issue of Harper's Magazine, by permission.

TO US, the war looked different. To nearly everybody else, the American performance in World War II looked like a monumental achievement in planning, organization, and command. The United States had to create armies, fleets, and air forces more or less from a standing start. It had to move them to half a dozen major fronts, strung halfway around the globe. It had to supply them — plus its hard-pressed allies — across two oceans. Finally, it had to use this power effectively against powerful, wily, and desperate enemies, who appeared to be in a fair way to conquer the rest of the world. All this America succeeded in doing; and at the end one got the impression of a nation overflowing with the capabilities that count in modern war.

Not everyone, however, got this impression at all times and places. Indeed, less than eighteen months before the final victory the American effort in one particularly vast theater seemed alarmingly thin. There—at the end of our longest line of communications — our combat ground forces consisted of only one regimental-sized unit. The nearest American combat infantry force was three thousand miles away. At one stage, the fate of operations over a huge area hinged on the ability of a few hundred of those infantrymen to stay on their feet another few days — a task which at that moment struck most of us all but impossible.

When a campaign unexpectedly comes to such a pass, a military man might (I suppose) suspect that there had been a miscalculation somewhere. Such an inference might also be drawn from an investigation report made a little later, which recorded an "almost complete breakdown of morale in the major portion of the unit."

The infantrymen involved had, for their part, no doubt about it. Their impression was that things had somehow got off on the wrong foot, and had stayed on that foot—or worse, feet—ever since.

THE STORY of Galahad — the code name given the organization during its operations, to the intemperate amusement

The first intimate report on the least known campaign of World War II . . . how it was bungled by Washington and the theater command . . . and how it was finally saved by the heroism, good humor, and incredible endurance of a handful of foot soldiers.

of its more literary members — throws some light on how not to run an army.

It also throws some light on other things less easy to define. For Galahad, in spite of everything, did not give an altogether satisfactory account of itself. It marched some five hundred miles over jungle-covered hills and fought five major and thirty minor engagements (by the War Department's reckoning) in a campaign that saw the enemy cleared from an area the size of Connecticut. At the end, after it had been pulled back for recuperation, the proportion of its survivors who were AWOL or in the guardhouse was, to say the least, abnormally high. The rest were dispirited or embittered. Yet, as a cloudy day is sometimes redeemed at sunset, a glow was cast upon its last days by an order conferring upon it the Distinguished Unit Citation—which amounted to a decoration for superior performance of duty for every man in its ranks.

I might have had some premonition about the organization from the haphazard way in which I fell into it. It came about as a result of a remark I chanced to drop in the mess line after a cold night in Mississippi in September 1943—for nights can be cold in early autumn, even in the deep South, when you are sleeping on the ground. I said that I wished I could be sure of doing my fighting in a warm climate. As it happened, my neighbor in the line was a lieutenant in the Adjutant General's section. The consequences illustrate the frightening role that pure accident can play in one's life.

"Do you?" he said. "Maybe it could be arranged. We've had orders from Washington asking for volunteers with jungle training—I don't know what for. Probably for a jungle-training center in Panama or some place. Why don't you send your name in?"

"I don't see how I could claim to have

had any jungle training," I ventured.

"Oh, well. You could say that Mississippi is like a jungle in spots. In fact, isn't life itself really a jungle?"

A few days later it was rumored that the call for volunteers was not, after all, entirely routine and innocuous. I do not know who started the rumor. Perhaps it through the orders from Washington. The through the order's from Washington. The lieutenant in the Adjutant General's section surely had not done so. That I deducted when, ten days later, I found myself at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation and learned that I had volunteered for a "dangerous and hazardous mission."

What else the mission might be, no one in the barracks where I was quartered with other junior officers had any idea. Later that evening, however, several of us were given the qualification cards of a thousand other officers and enlisted men who had volunteered, and were detailed to form a battalion out of them by reveille. Another battalion was to be formed, we heard, from the cards of another thousand who had volunteered from the Caribbean Defense Command. I was to remember later a remark by a fellow lieutenant in the detail:

"This is one way to form an organization — on the docks. If they try to use it before it's had a chance to grow together, we'll find out how good the method is."

After working most of the night, we held a formation in the morning of the men that went with the cards. In any body of troops, I suppose, the ones who are likely to give trouble stand out. It was certainly true of this one. I thought I had never seen a less tractable-looking assemblage.

I glanced at the round-faced, youthful officer beside me—Captain Senff. "The only thing stupider than volunteering is asking for volunteers," he allowed amiably in the accents of North Carolina. "We've got the misfits of half the divisions in the country."

That night, when I had charge of the orderly room for a two-hour stint, I got to see some of them individually. The post MP's brought in a steady procession of them—more accurately an unsteady procession. They were not only drunk but AWOL, for since we were sailing the next day we had been confined to the area. In the conventional, prim division I had come from such license would have been inconceivable. However, a tone of amazed indignation is difficult to maintain indefinitely, and soon I was merely taking down names. I saw myself spending the next few weeks as chief witness

in a succession of courts-martial. In fact, nothing was ever said about the delinquencies I reported. This was an organization, it developed, that was never going to have a chance to catch up even with the important things; it had no time at all for the niceties.

A headquarters was set up in the main saloon of our transport, which turned out to be the *S. S. Lurline* traveling incognito. It was here that I was brought up in my turn to be presented to our acting commander.

"Quite a distinction for us," he observed, "having a Signal Corps officer for a communications platoon leader."

I thought it time to unburden myself of a fact that had been bothering me; I explained that I had been in field-wire and message center but knew nothing of radio.

Col. Charles N. Hunter was a highly competent professional—a West Pointer, with the true soldier's capacity to eliminate the human factor from a situation. My smile of disarming candor manifestly failed.

"Then, Lieutenant," he stated with a singularly direct gaze, "you had better learn."

Radio turned out to be, for all practical purposes, the only communications equipment we were to have. Fortunately, my platoon happened to include some highly competent operators and repairmen.

Characters in Uniform

WHAT SURPRISED me most about the men with whom I found myself was that, among the wilder and rougher types, there were so many sober and normal-seeming Americans. It was hard to believe, however, that a call for volunteers for a hazardous mission would bring out a cross-section of the population, and I wondered what it was that set these men apart. In the course of a 42-day voyage, I began to form some idea.

Whatever else they might be—adventurers, idealists, drunkards, journalists, wealthy ne'er-do-wells, old army types, cotton speculators, American Indians (we had three or four), Niseis, Southern farm boys, and Northern slum products—they were individualists with little taste for being told what to do, and scant impatience with the routine and monotony of training camps. Each had something egging him on. In some it was a nomadic instinct that is never reconciled to the settled life. In the two youngest members of my platoon—Eve, the fresh-looking, blond boy from the Middle West who turned out to have the blessed gift of a Way with Mules; and my radio technician, an intent

New Yorker of Italian parentage—it was perhaps the simple high-mindedness of youth. In the oldest member—a quiet, steady, slow-smiling New Englander who was to outlast many of his juniors, a house-builder in civilian life—it seemed to be the unrelenting conscience that goes with craftsmanship.

Then there were the junior officers with whom I shared a stateroom. Winnie Steinfield was a young doctor for whom frontiers had a powerful attraction—any frontiers—and whose instinct was to go beyond them. (He was to cross the ultimate one ten years later in a small boat in a storm off the coast of Maine.) Lieutenant Scott had been a fire marshal and a dedicated hunter who was drawn irresistibly by the chance to pursue the toughest game of all. Phil Weld, whose family had given Harvard its boathouse, was, I suspected, in the *Lurline* for fundamentally the same reason that his forebears had been in the *Mayflower*—though with a gay-er and not perceptibly reverent spirit.

Finally, there was Lieutenant Caldwell, the Tennessean whose explanation of why he was there, although probably not the true one, won him great admiration. He had been taking a junior officers' course at an infantry training school and his class, as he recalled in his dry drawl, "had had an exercise in weapons placement out in some ol' piney hills." Young Caldwell, it appeared, had taken the occasion to catch up on his sleep and accordingly was somewhat at a loss when he was called upon, along with the others, to submit a written terrain evaluation.

"So Ah just put down 'About ten dollars an acre.' They gave me the choice of joining up with you fellows or standing a court-martial. And so, ol' gallant Caldwell—here he is."

Our battalion commander was a puzzler to me. Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd Osborne had fought through the Philippines debacle and, escaping, had reached Australia after a voyage of over fifty days in an open boat. What his condition then was, I hesitate to surmise. When he boarded the *Lurline* he weighed all of 120 pounds, and he resembled an assistant professor of mathematics. It finally came out that he had a characteristic that must be rare among those who have actually been through war: he liked fighting. Months later during a period of tranquility unusual at that time, he was to make a lasting impression upon me by observing plaintively, "I don't see much chance of any contact with the enemy, but of course we *could* cross the ridge and have a fight with B battalion." He gave a mild laugh, and of course he was joking, but all the

same . . . the idea *had* occurred to him.

This shipload of soldiers had no designation. We were not even classified as, for example, an infantry regiment. We were just two battalions of something or other. This tended to be disconcerting, even to an assortment of individuals with little in common but an aversion to conformity. In a way, it was as if we did not really exist.

We had no idea where we were going. On a map of the world I had bought in San Francisco (to be prepared for any place), I plotted our course as best I could across the empty, endless Pacific on the basis of guesses as to our speed and direction. I was greatly pleased to find I was only a few hundred miles off when we made our first landfall at Noumea, New Caledonia. Partly there and partly at Brisbane, Australia, we picked up a third battalion, this one composed of veterans of the Southwest Pacific Campaign.

By that time, we had been issued a booklet that gave us an idea of what was in store. It was an account of Brigadier Wingate's force of British, Gurkhas, and Indians—the renowned Chindits—and of the extraordinary march they had made the year before halfway across Burma and back.

Though we made two ports in Australia, no shore leave was granted. "Not for this bunch!" our headquarters was reported to have declared fervently, and although our outcry was piteous, everyone conceded privately that any other decision would have been foolhardy. This view was shared even by those who managed to sneak away for a turn ashore anyway, by wriggling through portholes or shinnying down hawsers (it was never quite clear how.) At Fremantle, however, we were given a break of sorts by being marched through the city in a formal parade.

This was the only parade the organization was ever to put on. It seems fitting that so many of its members should have come back from it reeking like breweries without having broken ranks or even having lost the step. This was a testimony both to the dexterity of our rank-and-file and to the generosity of the Fremantlese, who joined the march in great numbers bearing foaming pitchers.

How Not To Train Troops

OUR DESTINATION was a desolate area of central India, where we were to have two months' training in infantry weapons and guerrilla tactics. Here, even if enough liquor could have been turned up to get drunk on—and it could not—there was nothing for a celebrant to dam-

age but thron-scrub; while such elderly females as appeared once in awhile were clearly safe even from men who shot vultures under the impression they were turkeys and ate them. (Do not ask me how it was possible for this to happen. All I know is I saw it.)

We heard that the decision to form our organization had been taken at the conference President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had held in Quebec. We got the impression that the two Chiefs of State were the last, as well as the first, to have any precise idea of how we were to be used. As far as we could tell, it had not even been settled whether we were to be under direct British or American control. While the issue remained in doubt, we profited from His Britannic Majesty's patronage by being issued a rum ration. It was not enough to make the desert bloom—but the evidence that a military command could be human did something for our spirits, and the rum itself helped counteract the effects of the tea our pirate cooks boiled in 20-gallon drums.

Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Commander of the Southeast Asia Command, paid us a visit. In preparation, mimeographed copies of an elaborate scenario were distributed to us. This called for various spontaneous demonstrations of enthusiasm by the hurrahing troops, but it was never used. An advance party, after making our acquaintance, had all the copies recalled and decided to let the occasion run its natural course. It did so—and was quite successful.

General Joseph W. Stilwell—who was Mountbatten's Deputy as well as Commanding General of the Chinese Army in India—never came to see us at all, although eventually we were to be placed under his operational control. If we had not been the only American infantry be-

tween New Guinea and North Africa, I suppose we should not particularly have expected him to appear. As it was, our feelings of being detached from the known world were deepened.

This was also the beginning of our suspicion that Stilwell was interested exclusively in the Chinese army he had trained, of which two divisions were then being deployed in northern Burma, our destination. From the record that was later written, it is clear that he had reason to be preoccupied with his Chinese divisions and his relations with the Generalissimo in Chungking. All the same, it is hard to believe that his headquarters could not have avoided conveying an impression that finally—when the end was near—provoked our commanding officer to charge that favoritism was being displayed toward the Chinese at our expense.

We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams we could be reorganized. Presumably the plans for our employment were being changed. I was to learn later in life that, perhaps because we are so good at organizing, we tend as a nation to meet any new situation by reorganizing; and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralization. During our reorganizations, several commanding officers were tried out on us, which added to the discontinuity. Meanwhile, Colonel Hunter, whom everyone respected, held the organization together.

We still lacked a designation of any kind. The authorities, in their preoccupation with Tables of Organization, would doubtless have been surprised to learn what an unsettling effect this had on the men. The British seem to have a better understanding of these matters. They recognize that a name like the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons or the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, and the history that goes with it, can do something for an organization that a mobile snack-bar cannot. (Not that we had a mobile snack-bar either). Perhaps the British awareness of the importance to an organization of a sense of corporate identity also leads them to avoid reorganizations.

On the night of Christmas Eve, the men cut loose, or, as Winnie Steinfield expressed it, they "sought release through an externalization of inner tensions." A rifle shot rang out, then another. The example was picked up all over the camp. Within minutes it sounded as if every weapon in our considerable armory of small arms was being discharged — rifles, carbines, Tommy guns, Browning automatics. Tracer-bullets from machine guns were criss-

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crossing on their way to the horizon like red-hot bees. Magnesium flares hung over the scene, casting their white glare upon it while colored signal lights zoomed into the firmament.

Officers sent out by the enraged battalion headquarters to apprehend the miscreants were later found — by officers sent out to find *them*—dancing about like satyrs, firing their revolvers into the sky. A British major whom we had invited to stay over for the night, after apologizing to him that since nothing had been planned it would be a quiet occasion, surveyed the appalling scene with the *sang-froid* of his race.

"I cawn't help wondering what it's like hyah," he observed, "When you're *nought* having a quiet occasion."

One day we were assembled and informed that we finally had an appellation. The United States Army had outdone itself to find a name to make hearts beat faster; it was going to send us into battle as the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional). After the last formation that day, I heard a Pfc in the next platoon addressing the ranks in a fair imitation of his sergeant's voice: "Listen, you monkeys. The Army has bestowed a great honor upon you, and it ain't one you deserve. I don't know what 'composite' means, but no one who'd ever seen what lousy soldiers you gold-bricks make would call you even provisional."

Mules and Merrill

WE HAD BEEN told that five hundred mules were on their way to us from the United States, and meanwhile we had been lent a few British mules to practice with. It was not until almost the end of our training period that our own animals began to arrive. The mules, augmented by a few saddle horses, were to be our sole means of transport—and, to understate it, one of our major preoccupations. Half of our men had never seen a mule before and not one in 50 had ever touched one—or had any burning desire to do so.

The true inwardness of the situation was brought home to me at the outset of our first practice river-crossing. I had the job of taking the lead mule across (my whimsical battalion commander, Colonel Osborne, had learned that I had been a book reviewer before rallying to the colors). I found myself offshore in the Betwa River, fighting cheek-to-jowl with a mule whose head was as big as my torso, trying to launch him toward the opposite bank. (The technique, as I discovered, was to keep the animal turning in circles until he tired of trying to head back, and struck out across the river. Thereupon, it was advisable to slip down his back and cling

to his tail; if once he got away from you the brute would leave you behind no matter how you struggled to catch up.)

Coasting along — alone but for the straining mule in the broad waters of an exotic Indian river with the shore of the Princely State of Gwalior on the other side — it struck me that I had come a long, long way.

The mules were evidently one of the two things we had been waiting for. The other — a commanding general — now also arrived. Because of the warmth of his personality, the evidence he gave of genuine interest and confidence in us, and his convincing air of knowing his business, Brigadier General Frank D. Merrill, our new commander, instantly made a favorable impression that was to grow stronger with time. He told us that we should not have long to wait. Soon thereafter we were piled into a couple of trains. After ten days, including two in a river boat on the Brahmaputra, we reached the end of the line near Ledo, Assam, at the northeast corner of India.

At eight o'clock in the evening of February 6, 1944, we were scheduled to set off on our long march into Burma, but at that time, amid scenes of turmoil such as various artists have considered characteristics of Hades, we were still being issued mules and packsaddles. In fact, at precisely H-Hour the occupants of the bamboo edifice housing the First Battalion headquarters were clinging to the rafters, while an overwrought saddle horse down below was kicking it to pieces. It was not until after midnight that the chaos of that last evening was converted into a long and only dimly visible column and, in a sudden and impressive silence, we set off down the Ledo Road.

By prodigious efforts on the part of American engineer units, an unreckoning use of equipment, and the toil of what must have been thousands of native laborers, this amazing road had been pushed 120 miles over precipitous, forested hills. It ran from the end of the Indian road net to the northwestern tip of the central valley of Burma, which was also the point of farthest Japanese advance. The plan was to extend the Ledo south and east across the country, through the northern Burmese railhead at Myitkyina, to a juncture with the famous Burma Road that led into China. The object was to open a supply route for China-based operations against the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek's armies and the United States air force in China were at that time dependent for supplies upon what could be flown in from India over The Hump. The task of the 5307th was to spearhead the two Chinese divisions that — operating from

Indian bases under Stilwell's command — were trying to push the Japanese southward to make possible the advance of the Ledo Road.

The first night of our march we kept going until well after dawn, and we resumed in the afternoon. At our second night's bivouac — a gloomy engineer encampment of *bashas* on the slope of a clearing cut in the dank forest — one of the men in my platoon could not be located at mess call. He was a short, dark individual with something Mongoloid in his features, suggesting descent from a Hunnish ancestor, and had always been somewhat of a problem. I am not sure why this was, except that he never seemed to fit into the scheme of things and was always looking at you with puzzlement because you could not make anything of him. When we discovered him, the evidence was plain that he had put the muzzle of his Tommy gun in his mouth, pulled the trigger, and blown the back of his head off. The event was not discussed but there was a sense that we had crossed a kind of dividing line.

Two or three days later we crossed a more concrete dividing line. After winding slowly up the longest grade of that toilsome road, we reached the 4300-foot saddle of Pangsau Pass. On the other side of it lay Burma. To the west, on the far horizon, more nearly resembling a stratum of cloud than mountains, were the snowy ridges of the Himalayas. Behind, stretching down into the valley — the only time I ever saw it in full view — was a long line of heavy-laden men and animals that in time acquired the name of Merrill's Marauders. This designation — said to have been coined by a newspaper man — made an instant appeal to the troops. The same could not be said of the official code name that was bestowed upon us at this time, although there were those who maintained that it required inspiration of a high order to think of the name *Galahad* for an organization like the 5307th.

Column's Moving!

OUR ARRIVAL at the end of the Ledo Road after a march of eleven days marked the beginning of a campaign of three months' duration during which we had no contact with the world except by radio and plane and never saw a road or motorcar except those possessed by the Japanese. Whatever came to us in that time came by air; all our supplies, including even the grain for the animals, were kicked out of planes a couple of hundred feet up. The breakables sailed down on parachutes and too often came to rest in the top of a tree seventy feet high.

The terrain of northern Burma is divided into corridors by parallel ridges running north and south. It greatly favored the Japanese, for in those defiles a battalion could hold off a division. The Chinese were finding it hard going. What we were to do was to go wide around the Japanese right flank — over the ranges, through the nearly impenetrable forest, across the rivers — and undercut their defenses by attacking without warning from the rear. This maneuver the 5307th carried out four times, to such effect that the commander of the Japanese 18th Division, which held the area, is said to have believed that the three battalions of Americans actually amounted to two divisions.

The strategy of which we were a part was well understood by all of us; for it was characteristic of the organization that most of the privates in it had managed to add a map to their belongings and insisted upon being kept informed not only of how their platoon's mission fitted into the company's, but what place the battalion had in the grand plan of the Southeast Asia Command. The maps gave us the only vista we had for the actual terrain made us virtually blind. Except when we crossed a few acres of open ground where the local hill people — the Kachins — had a cluster of bamboo huts, or descended into the main valleys where our objectives lay, we moved through matted forest and ten-foot *kunai* glass that shut out even the sky.

On every trail the Japanese had outposts or patrols. Sometimes the first evidence of their presence came when they opened fire on the head of the column. Again, we would find signs of them — fresh tracks — and the whisper would be passed down the line from man to man, "Take a five-yard interval."

Off in the forest a band of monkeys would set up a din of whooping, humorless laughter. Breaking out of the silence, it was incredible and unnerving. Then it would abruptly cease, and that was perhaps even more unnerving. The column would halt while the scouts were sent out. The only sound then would be the soft stomping of the mules and the clink of a harness ring — and the questioning, plaintive, four-note whistle of a bird in the treetop. "Whee-oo, Whee-oo," it went, at 10-second intervals. There was always that bird. I have only to whistle its call now to bring the whole mood back, including the earthy, faintly acrid smell of the jungle floor.

In the breathless stillness, the first rattle of firing was incredibly loud. It had the effect of a horrible moral shock. It was as if the pleasant trappings of the earth,

the blue sky, the shimmering leaves of the bamboo, the trickly little stream, were all whisked away and you saw a death's-head leering into your face.

After the first burst, the silence would close in again like the well-oiled door of a cage. Then explosions would follow one upon another as the Japanese brought their grenade-throwers to bear.

From the head of the column, the order would be passed back, "Weapons platoon forward!"

Then, a minute later, coming up from the rear: "Clear the trail."

You got the mules into the dense growth alongside to let the mortar crews move through. Their heavily-laden mules were the biggest of all, without doubt the biggest that ever came out of Missouri. From up front would come bursts of automatic-rifle and machine-gun fire and then the detonations of mortars. From the middle of the column you could never be sure whose they were unless they began to hit around you.

"Medics forward!"

The wounded who still stand were mounted on horses. Litter patients were sent to the rear to be picked up by the Chinese regiment that was following behind and would provide bearers to carry them until our advance had reached a paddy field on which the little liaison planes could land. A detail remained behind to bury the riflemen killed in the first burst and to erect a bamboo cross.

"Column's moving!"

You picked your way around a couple of dead Japanese lying like dolls on the trail and pushed on.

And so it went, from one place name on the map to another: Lanem Ga, Tanja Ga, Wesu Ga, Lagang Ga, Janpan, Auché, Warong, Manpin, Sharaw, Weilangyang, Hsamshingyang, Tingkrukawng, Ritpong, Namkwi . . .

The major engagements came when we descended from the hills. The first indication the Japanese would have of our arrival would come when they ran into an American roadblock of battalion strength far behind the front on their main supply route. Their reaction was habitually violent. They would attack in waves. The number that were killed by the 5307th is not known, but the toll at Walawbum, Shaduzup, and Nhpum Ga alone was estimated at 1,700.

In order to achieve surprise, we often had to leave the trails altogether and hack our way through solid vegetation. One stretch of four miles once took us two days. That was on the way to Shaduzup—a mission the First Battalion, to which I belonged, had by itself. Altogether it took

us two weeks to cover the whole distance of 50 miles. The last day we waded down a river—tributary of the Mogaung—through water which was sometimes waist high.

We reached the Mogaung itself, on which Shaduzup was located, at dusk. From a hill overlooking the river, we could see the Japanese bathing and washing their cooking pots. Peering out through the trees, we must have resembled a band of Iroquois gazing down upon an unsuspecting encampment of settlers; certainly we were wild-enough looking by then. Before dawn, the battalion crept down from the hill, silently forded the Mogaung, and fell upon the Japanese with Tommy guns and bayonets.

The Japanese speedily collected themselves and counterattacked all day in a vain effort to dislodge us. For 36 hours they poured artillery shells into our positions—whinnying, high-trajectory 70's that you could hear coming for an eternity, whip-lash 75's, and thundering 150's. For all too-brief intervals Mustang fighter planes from India would come overhead and keep the Japanese batteries quiet. But most of the time, having no artillery of our own, we had to sit and take it—until the Chinese regiment we were spear-heading could come up with its pack howitzers and take over from us.

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When I Close My Eyes

AT NIGHT we were helpless. We could only make ourselves small and pull our helmets down over our ears. Toward dawn of the last night, just after a shell had turned a tree into a shower of sparks a few feet from the foxhole where I crouched with the brassy taste of fear in my mouth — every time a shell burst it was as if a dry cell had been touched to my tongue — a clear voice, ringing out of the darkness, spoke for all of us:

"Where the hell are those other five thousand, three-hundred and six composite units?"

The next morning I was impressed when one of the more profane stalwarts of the communications platoon confessed that he had spent much of the night praying.

"And you see," said I, "your prayers were answered."

"Not by a damn sight they ain't been! What I was praying for was a shell fragment in the fleshy part of the leg."

This wistful jest was heard with growing frequency as the campaign progressed. The prospect of being spared merely to endure more of it seemed less and less satisfactory. Not to know, from one instant to the next, week after week, when the silence would explode around you created a suspense difficult to describe. It made everyone look alike, for all faces — and they were equally emaciated to begin with — wore habitually the same expression of furtive intentness, of the strain of trying to exercise a sixth sense. Every time a twig crunched underfoot it jarred your helmet; the echo made it sound as if it came from off to the side, from where an ambush would be.

Maybe some kinds of danger are stimulating and ennobling, but if so, this was not one of them. You felt it as sordid, becasings, evil, a steady contamination. It was corrosive, like an acid eating at the heart and nerves. Every minute was an enemy to be outlived; the weeks were lifetimes. The number of mental breakdowns in the organization mounted to several score.

In other parts of the Army, men might talk of women. We talked of food. We were perpetually famished. K-rations, on which we depended, were calculated merely to prevent starvation. We never received enough in one air-drop to carry us to the next; three days' rations had to do for four days or even five. However short on food we might be, we had to march. No matter what, the column had to go on. Jungle sores appeared on our bodies, the result, probably, of the lesions

left by the leeches that fastened on us during the night. Many of the men could hardly walk (they had to anyway) because the sand that seeped into our shoes from our continual river crossings wore the skin off the soles of the feet! Dysentery and fevers were epidemic and left wraiths in their wake. Those with dysentery could eat nothing while the disease raged, which was for about a week, except the little cubes of chocolate we were issued as "B-rations." This was a windfall for the others, of course, who were able to trade off their chocolate for real food — cans of pork and egg yolk and "cheese units" — that the dysentery sufferers could not get down or carry, weak as they were.

Fighting the enemy took it out on the unit, fighting disease and the hills took out still more, but maybe what took out most of all was the battle of the mules.

The mules had become as worn out as the men. When the monsoon rains began to turn the surface of the trails to butter, the only way the animals could mount the steep slopes was by galloping up on momentum. They would go bounding up like huge rabbits, the exhausted muleteers struggling to keep up. When they slipped and fell — which was often — they could not rise until they had been unloaded. Then they could not be reloaded except at the top of the hill, which meant that their 200-pound packs had to be manhandled up the slope by men already burdened with heavy packs of their own. The muleteers became virtually dehumanized. Sometimes the struggling animals reached the crest only to topple over and go crashing down the precipitous flanks to the ridge, as like as not breaking their backs or stabbing themselves to death on broken bamboo. In any event, the column had to push on.

The world beyond the hills of northern Burma was something we could think of only with incredulity. We kept moving through a kind of green limbo, as if we had become detached from the human race. How could we ever explain what it was like? The danger and the hardships were not the important things, we would tell ourselves, and we would all nod wisely. In my first letter when I got out, I wrote anxiously that it was not all bad. There was lots of joking and laughter.

What were the jokes? One would say, "Whenever I close my eyes, I see a tenderloin steak . . . French fries . . ." And another would interrupt, "You're lucky. Whenever I close mine, I see a mule's behind. Also when I don't." That was about the way the jokes were, but, like everything else, they were part of something we felt we had to communicate, that we must explain when we got back. Life

could never be the same for those who had learned what we had learned. We had learned it during the long talks on quiet evenings around the embers of a fire in a shallow pit, over which we heated water to make cocoa with the shavings of a hoarded chocolate bar, when the murmured conversation would range over the day's events and what life is for, while the Burmese hills stood black and silent around us. We learned it when the firing began and each of us read in the face of the man next to him the same undisguised, horribly anxious fear he himself was struggling with, something each shared yet each was utterly alone with. When we got out, we would tell what it was.

It is sometimes this way in a dream. You see life in a new and queer perspective or bathed in a strange and revealing illumination. The mysterious design of things is made clear and you understand . . . it is so simple and unmistakable . . . it is on the tip of your tongue, you have almost got it . . . and then you wake up and it is gone and there is only the tantalizing flavor of the dream left. So it was with us. Only last month I ran into a former major of the Third Battalion, and it was the same as it had been among us when we first got out. There was the same exchange of puzzled, questioning glances: can you say what it was? And you never can.

The Battle of Nhpum

BECAUSE THE Area Command back in Assam was the origin of the orders that kept us moving, we had a natural and wholesome antipathy toward it. This was not improved when, in the course of the campaign, the Command responded to a list of recommended promotions we sent in by suggesting that we interest ourselves less in promotions and more in fighting. This reply made a lasting impression on lieutenants from over-strength divisions (of whom I was one) who had been in grade so long that Colonel Osborne proposed to issue oak-leaf clusters for our gold bars.

Another memorable message reached us in the midst of one of our most arduous treks, when we had been unable for several days to reach India by our radio; the vegetation had been so dense that the bamboo refused to fall when we cut it and we could not clear a space for our antennas. Finally it thinned out and we were able to spot a liaison plane quartering over the jungle, obviously looking for us. I flagged it from a tiny clearing and it dropped a message. The message inquired acidly when we were going to conclude our scenic tour of northern Burma and get to Shaduzup.

It was after Nhpum Ga, however, that the unit developed a real and smoldering hostility toward the Command that was never to be extinguished.

Nhpum Ga was a village of a few huts on top of a hill where our Second Battalion had been ordered to stand and block a Japanese advance. What had happened was that while my battalion, the First, had been going around the Japanese flank to Shaduzup, the Second had been sent even farther around, down the valley of the Chindwin, to strike the Japanese still deeper in the rear. As it turned out, the Japanese were just then preparing to mount precisely the same kind of offensive up the same valley to outflank the Chinese. With this offensive the outnumbered Americans collided head-on. After killing, at point-blank range, some 200 of the enemy who charged it through the *kunai* grass, the battalion was ordered to pull back some 20 miles and hold the valley.

It arrived at Nhpum Ga under artillery bombardment and in a state of exhaustion. It was promptly surrounded and for two weeks fought for its life. Even drinking water had to be dropped by plane. The First Battalion was ordered to move to the scene by forced marches. Not until we of the First arrived, ravenously hungry (we had not been able to get our last food-drop) to augment the Third Battalion — which was holding an airstrip five miles farther up the valley — was a force able to break through to the battle-torn hilltop where so long the men of the Second had been fighting back to back among a litter of dead horses and mules. Fifty-seven had been killed; 300 wounded.

By that time, the 5307th had lost about 700 men, mostly wounded or sick, of its original 3,000. The rest were as good as finished. What had kept them going toward the end was the promise — the original source of which was never determined — that after the Nhpum Ga operation they would be pulled back to rest and reorganize before being sent into combat the next dry season.

Then the blow fell. Far from being brought back — the 5307th was to be sent on a tougher mission than any it had yet had. It was to lead an advance to Myitkyina, an important Japanese base on the Irrawaddy far to the southeast.

The Dull Edge

BETWEEN General Stilwell's headquarters and us there was, not unnaturally, a difference of perspective. To Stilwell, Myitkyina was a vital objective. If it could be taken, planes flying The Hump would before very long be able to refuel there from the pipeline that was being

laid along the Ledo Road and hence the volume of supplies they could carry to China would be substantially increased. Our costly victory at Nhpum Ga was later called by the official Army history — in the volume entitled *Stilwell's Command Problems* — “one of the hardest-fought American engagements in Burma.” But it was, the history added, “from the perspective of China-Burma-India Theater headquarters a battle between a few battalions. Farther south, around Imphal, whole divisions were grappling for a prize that might change the course of the war in Asia.” (It was at this time that the Japanese offensive against India, which had carried over the mountains of the Burmese frontier almost into the Indian lowlands, was just beginning to lose its impetus).

Stilwell, it must be acknowledged, had a good deal to worry about. The Imphal offensive threatened, among other things, to cut the railroad to Assam that supplied his forces. The British had never been in sympathy with a campaign in north Burma, and Stilwell suspected the Generalissimo in Chungking of going behind his back to order the Chinese divisions in Burma to go slowly and avoid losses. As *Stilwell's Command Problems* also makes clear, he was concerned, too, by the Generalissimo's refusal to launch the offensive into north Burma across the Salween River from China, which Stilwell considered so important, or to release another division from China for the offensive against Myitkyina.

The official history further points out, however, that as a result of Nhpum Ga, “the fighting edge of the most mobile and most obedient force that Stilwell had was worn dull. From this fact were to flow consequences of great magnitude.”

What the 5307th felt was that while Myitkyina was doubtless important, so was Shanghai, and to begin with — no one really believed the unit was to be sent against the one any more than against the other. When it appeared that in fact it was to be sent against Myitkyina, not a soul doubted that the Area Command was either wholly ignorant of (or wholly indifferent to) the organization's condition — or was out of its mind. General Merrill had a heart attack during the siege of Nhpum Ga and was reported seriously ill. We felt helpless in the absence of anyone to represent us back in Assam, where it was rumored jealously among Stilwell's subordinates of the renown General Merrill had achieved was a factor in the situation. Doubting that it would be able to make Myitkyina even if there were no Japanese in the way, the 5307th was convinced that someone had blundered. Unlike the Light Brigade, it did not scruple

to reason why. It reasoned why with bitterness, though without much strength, of which it had little left. Worst of all, it felt betrayed.

There was no alternative, however, but to go on. After two weeks at Nhpum Ga, it back-tracked 20 miles up the valley to a rendezvous with two untried Chinese regiments that were to make up the main strength.

I have two memories in particular of that historic encounter. One is of Lieutenant Weld, still retaining an air of Beacon Street and the Cape though clad only in soiled and ragged underwear, jovially panhandling for rice among the Chinese troops. (Phil was tall and active and required more food than the rest of us. To keep going, he would salvage the so-called dextrose tablets from the K-rations that the rest of us would throw away unless we were positively starving; these objects had the appearance and consistency of the little tiles on bathroom floors and tasted just as you would expect them to.) The other memory is of being summoned by Colonel Hunter to the lean-to serving as headquarters for the operation, where he sat with the commander of the Chinese force. I was reminded for some reason of Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, though not for long.

“The walkie-talkies the General has received don't work,” said Colonel Hunter. “See if you can fix them.”

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I had a horrible feeling that upon the outcome of my efforts would depend the future psychological balance of power between the two commanders and I felt faint. I prayed harder than I had prayed the last night at Shaduzup. There was only one thing I knew about walkie-talkies: if you inserted the two batteries head-and-head and tail-and-tail — which would seem the natural thing to do — the set would not function; head and tail was the ordained arrangement. I opened the first set — and I was saved. They were in the wrong way. There was nothing else the matter.

General Merrill was sufficiently recovered to return and take command of End Run, as the Myitkyina operation was termed—with a double meaning not intended. The 5307th, as usual, was split up for the trek into its three battalions, though it was now reduced to half its original strength. To our battalion, the First, was attached the Chinese 150th Regiment, to the Second the Chinese 88th, and to the Third 300 Kachin levies. The three columns thus formed moved separately, though in proximity, toward Myitkyina. The Americans marched with what habitually served them in place of morale, a sort of what-the-hell-did-you-expect-anyhow? attitude. More than that, we had, to sustain us, the explicit promise that when we had performed this last task we would be flown back to a well-appointed rest camp in India. However, for the first time there began to be stragglers, men physically incapable of keeping up with the column in the heat — which had become intense — and indifferent to the danger of prowling Japanese.

End Run On All Fours

IT WAS sixty-five miles to Myitkyina and the terrain that had to be crossed was the worst so far, including as it did the saw-toothed Kumon range. The trail over the hills, which crossed the highest pass at 6,000 feet, had not been used in years and in some places had to be redug out of the sheer slopes. In addition, the rains were becoming harder and more frequent. The mules simply sat down now for the steeper descents, sliding fifty yards at a stretch in the oily mud. Going up, steps had to be cut in the trails to give them a foothold. Even so, the surface was so treacherous that the losses from the animals slipping and plunging to their death down the mountainsides had become serious. One column lost twenty of its mules in a stretch of a few miles.

At one point, the weather became so bad the column was brought to a dead halt. It simply could not move. We camped where we stood, which for most of us was

on a steep hillside. The trail was a slide grooved with the hoof-marks of mules that had shot the length of it like otters. I remember vividly one of our radio operators standing in front of the spread poncho under which some of us were brewing coffee (the poncho villa, as we referred to it.) He was clad in filthy fatigues and was wasted by fever, but his moustache twitched with an irrepressible insouciance like a mouse's whiskers, and he had all the style and jauntiness of a Parisian boulevardier as he twirled the stick he carried and then, leaning back upon it theatrically, lifted his voice against the drumming of the monsoon shower in a version of the song "Pennies from Heaven":

"Every time it rains, it rains little drops of water."

However, it was not this occasion alone but another as well, I suspect, that fixed him in my mind as a not unworthy representative of the tattered 5307th. The other time was near the end and he was being evacuated—for general disability I suppose. It was my task to relieve him of the 17-jewel watch he had been issued and was now endeavoring to make away with. Expropriation of one kind or another is common enough in armies, but I like to think that only a member of our organization would have been capable of quite the astonished indignation with which he confronted me as I insisted upon his doing the honest thing and turning over the watch — I, a companion he had trusted and now was revealed as in league with the inimical world comprising everyone not in the 5307th, one of *them*!

At the outset of the march to Myitkyina, a new enemy attacked, and in a way it did more damage than any other, for it was mysterious, and unforeseen. It was a fever no one could identify, and it struck without warning, felling its victims virtually where they stood. Before it finished with us, 149 men succumbed and had to be evacuated. Many of them died later in the hospitals of Assam, where eventually the fever was identified as an unfamiliar kind of typhus. One of the fatal-

EDITOR'S NOTE—Mr. Ogburn, the author of this excellent article, is currently engaged in gathering material for a complete book on the subject of Merrill's Marauders. He would be delighted to hear from anyone who might have information which would be of assistance to him in the preparation of the book. Write him care Constance Smith, Literary Agent, 119 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y.

ities was the other lieutenant in my platoon. He left behind him a silence of which I was acutely aware, one that he had filled for so many weeks with repeated renditions of the first lines of a ditty that went something like, "I want a paper dolly just to call my own." There was still the bird that went "Whee-oo, WHEE-oo," however.

We also heard jungle cocks crowing in the distance. It always took an instant to realize they were not domestic fowl, and the realization when it came made the wilderness seem all the wilder. There was also a creature the men called an artillery bird, a kind of hornbill, that paralyzed the column whenever it flew overhead because the whistling of its wings was like the whistling of a 70-millimeter shell.

The main ridge of the Kumon looked insurmountable and very nearly was so. It was so steep that we had to crawl up part of it on all fours. We camped on the summit, in a thin ghostly cloud-forest where the trees were covered with mosses and lichens. It was cold, with a biting wind. For once—I do not know what had been the matter before—we were able to pick up a United States Army broadcast and heard a recording of Marian Anderson singing the Largo from Handel's "Messiah." I have seldom heard anything that moved me more. It was like an assurance—the first in many weeks—of a purpose in the universe that transcended fear and hunger and sickness.

The Kumon range was the most formidable natural barrier on the route of march. However, even after we had put it behind us, the toll from disease and exhaustion continued to mount. So, of course, did the toll of battle casualties as the dazed, half-demented columns plodded on.

The end was near for me, however. One night we camped in an abandoned village on an open elevation. The battalion headquarters, if it could be so called, occupied a basha raised on posts about five feet above the ground. In addition to Colonel Osborne, the battalion commander, Colonel Hunter, who commanded the column, was there, so that altogether my ignominious fate did not lack for an adequate audience. We had a fire going on a dirt hearth—which, as I realized with misgivings, must have made our shelter stand out for some little distance around like a jack-o'-lantern. I had taken off my shoes on entering so as not to track mud onto the floor. Then there came that awful rattle of firing that was always the preliminary. Obviously, a body of Japanese—Heaven knew of what size—had struck the perimeter. In a moment the mortars had opened up and were thundering all

around us. It is possible, even probable, that I led the exodus from the shack. I did not take time to put on my shoes before jumping, and I landed on a gaping cheese can. It laid my heel open nearly to the bone. I stumbled on out of the circle of light and hit the ground. Lying there in the dark amid the whine of bullets and in a drizzle of rain, holding my heel together to try and stay the flow of blood, I said to myself with an objective distinctness I still remember that this was assuredly the low point of my life so far.

The battle quickly subsided. It turned out that we had been mortared chiefly by the Chinese regiment we had with us which, as time went on, gave increasing evidence of being made up largely of trigger-happy children. The Japanese were dispersed, our casualties were treated, the medics taped up my heel, and in the morning we set off—for Myitkyina.

The indulgence accorded to invalids of having their packs put on the mules was granted to me, and by improvising a crutch I was able to hobble along for nearly a week. But the heel was infected and growing worse, and since I was of little use to anybody (I was included with about 30 others who were left behind for evacuation at an abandoned clearing that looked as if it would serve as a landing strip. It barely did serve. Two planes were lost in taking off, and in addition we had to beat off an attack by a Japanese patrol—fortunately a small one. At length, however, the operation was completed, and that night, after flying in hours over ground it had taken months to cross on foot, I was back in India lying in a real bed after a meal of real food under a real roof and was almost out of my mind with the luxury of it. But best of all was the news that came a few days later. Two battalions of the 5307th had in one last dash reached the airfield at Myitkyina, taking the Japanese completely by surprise, and had secured the approaches.

The hospital began rapidly to fill up as the DC-3's shuttling between Myitkyina and Ledo brought back the wounded, sick and exhausted. There was elation in the wards as the long stream of white-faced, incredulous-looking refugees swelled. The final success had been achieved, and the campaign at last was over.

This was the first elation the unit ever knew and the last, and it was short-lived.

Disaster By Mistake

NEWS ARRIVED that an attempt to take the town of Myitkyina unaccountably had failed. Later we heard the details. Two battalions of the Chinese

150th Regiment that had been sent to capture the town had taken a wrong turn and, meeting Japanese rifle-fire, had in returning it fired upon each other, each mistaking the other for the enemy, and had thus defeated the enterprise. The next day the whole 150th Regiment was sent forward, and incredibly enough, the mistake was repeated, but on a grander scale. We heard the story from a new evacuee. The two battalions that had gone into the town from different sides drove each other back out again, he explained, and into the arms of the reserve battalion which, thinking they both were Japanese, opened up on them with everything it had. One more effort was made by the 150th. This time it was stopped by heavy Japanese fire and, having by then suffered almost 700 casualties, had to be withdrawn.

That was on the 20th of May, three days after the 5307th — looking "pitiful but still a splendid sight" as Merrill later wrote — seized the airstrip. (They had to forgo a supply-drop to do so, although they had been without food for several days.) Myitkyina was at that time fairly lightly held — Stilwell later estimated the garrison at 1,000 — but the opportunity to seize it at little cost had been lost. The reinforcement of the Japanese began.

As it came out later, both sides at the battle of Myitkyina had wildly erroneous ideas of the other's strength. The Allied command persisted in the belief that the defending force numbered only 500, even when it had been built up nearly to its maximum strength of 3,500. This made it aggressive. The Japanese were unduly cautious because their mistake was in the other direction. They had the impression they were faced by a force of 30,000. Actually, the Allied force consisted at the start only of the survivors of the 5307th, the two Chinese regiments that had made the march (the serious depletion of which was already well advanced), and a third and part of a fourth Chinese regiment which had been flown in together with some British anti-aircraft troops. Across the Irrawaddy was another small British force — part of a new version of Wingate's celebrated Chindits that had been flown in to the south some time before — which was wasting away as rapidly as the 5307th and for similar reasons and hence was unable to carry out its mission of blocking Japanese traffic from the east. This assortment of troops, while theoretically closing in on Myitkyina, had the Japanese on three sides.

The Japanese in the town were well dug in and in addition were protected by the roads that, elevated above the level of the paddy fields, served as earthworks.

The defense, moreover, was favored by the heavy monsoon rains that had turned some of the surroundings into lakes.

An attack by a battalion of the 5307th on May 21 was pushed back to its starting point and one by the Chinese a few days later did no better. The evacuation of the 5307th was now running at between 75 and 100 a day. The last action fought by a Marauder battalion, as such, was on May 27. The men were then so worn out that some of them were not even able to stay awake to defend themselves, and the battalion commander lost consciousness three times while directing the engagement. By the end of May, only 200 of the 3,000 men with which the 5307th had gone into combat were considered fit to remain at Myitkyina. To be considered unfit and warranting evacuation, a man at that time had to run a fever of 102 degrees or better for three consecutive days.

"The earlier optimism," *Stilwell's Command Problems* notes, "was replaced by a brief period of extreme alarm, caused by the rapid disintegration of Galahad and the Chindits' evacuation of the block they had placed across the railway near Hopin. Only 12 men were left in the Second Battalion of Galahad, while the Chinese 150th Regiment was down to 600 men. American reinforcements of any men who could hold a rifle were rushed in from every possible source."

Among these reinforcement were two battalions of American engineers who "had not seen a rifle since their basic training days and had simply been taken from their bulldozers and power generators to fight as infantry combat teams." The rest consisted of 2,600 men, mostly infantry, who had arrived at Bombay from the United States on May 26 (on the *U.S.S. General Butler*) and were flown by installments to Myitkyina for combat after an average stay of a week at a training center. At Myitkyina, they were formed into three battalions, each seasoned with veterans of ours.

Pathetic and harrowing accounts of the fate of the "reinforcements" came back to us in the hospital wards. New evacuees told of men receiving instructions in their weapons in the planes taking them to Myitkyina — the "Cassino on a shoe-string," as the official history was to call it — and of how they were unnerved at the start by having to dive for cover on disembarking because the airfield was then under Japanese artillery fire. Instruction in weapons continued at Myitkyina; on one sector of the front it was sometimes difficult to know whether a rattle of firing meant a Japanese attack on the perimeter or a practice session on the im-

provided range by a detachment of newly-arrived Americans. More realistic practice was provided by taking the newcomers to Namkwi, a nearby village, where they could be pitted against the Japanese occupying force and disengaged if the situation became too hot.

Allied dispositions around the besieged town — and it was not always clear who was laying siege to whom — consisted of strong-points with gaps between them, and this made for murderous combat. There was infiltration and counter-infiltration, constant patrol clashes, uncertainty as to the whereabouts of friendly and hostile forces, and the ever-present threat of units being cut off. It was no wonder that the raw American troops sometimes went to pieces. Many were simply terrified, and there were instances in which engineer units broke and ran under fire, abandoning their wounded. Fifty individual cases were recognized as "psychopathic." One lieutenant of whom we heard suddenly discovered, upon being ordered to take a patrol out, that he was a conscientious objector (which did not spare him a court-martial).

The occurrence that brought home to us most tellingly the peculiar horror of the Myitkyina fighting was one that involved a company of engineers. On its way to take up a position, the company met a patrol of Asiatic soldiers it took to be Chinese. The two units came together and exchanged friendly greetings. It was not until the leader of the other force asked that the company lay down its arms that the inexperienced American captain realized that he had fallen into a Japanese trap. A dreadful toll was taken of the American company by Japanese machine-gunners before the survivors escaped. The company was never re-constituted.

Victory by the Unfit

THE ENGINEERS in time became first-rate combat soldiers, but not before they had suffered heavy casualties. There was no component of the Myitkyina force that was not hard hit. The detachment of Chindits on the Irrawaddy was reduced to 25 by attrition before the remnant was evacuated. The Chinese did not escape either. They fought and died heroically. Within three weeks of the first assault upon Myitkyina, the 150th and 89th Regiments were able to muster only 1,000 men between them, in addition to which only two other Chinese battalions could be scraped together.

It was only too plain that many of the Chinese troops were to begin with wholly unprepared for the kind of combat that

took place at Myitkyina. At a time when supply was particularly tight and a dozen disabled planes on the Myitkyina airstrip gave graphic expression to the situation, we heard that some of the Chinese units were recklessly firing off by night all the ammunition that could be flown in by day.

"They lie back in their foxholes and turn their machine guns loose like hoses," one of the Americans told us. "You'd think it was a damned amusement park, to see the tracers." The disgust of the 5307th was surpassed, however, by the fury of the adjoining Chinese regiment, which threatened to attack the offenders unless they behaved.

Before we had ever set out for Myitkyina, we were convinced that Stilwell's headquarters was overreaching itself. What we thought the results would be, I do not remember. I am sure, however, that we never anticipated quite what sort of reckoning there would be. Receiving only fragmentary information, we were not, in the first couple of weeks, aware of the dimensions of the reckoning as it unfolded. We had barely digested the news that the evacuation of the 5307th could not be completed, when we learned that orders had been issued that any of us who could walk were to be sent back to Myitkyina. We were stunned. As the official history was to put it, "This order was in sharp contrast to the men's expectations that after reaching Myitkyina they would have a long period of recuperation." It was indeed.

On the heels of this order, the convalescent camp was combed and 200 were adjudged sufficiently recovered to be sent back in. Of these, 50 were pronounced unfit for any kind of service upon arrival at Myitkyina and were returned. (The remaining 150 were among the veterans assigned to the new battalions who shared in the six Distinguished Service Crosses earned at Myitkyina by members of the 5307th).

Then began a time when the Marauders, who had done so much fighting, were themselves fought over. On one side was Stilwell's headquarters, which was placing "extremely heavy moral pressure, just short of outright orders . . . on medical officers to return to duty or keep in the line every American who could pull a trigger." On the other were the medical officers themselves — the unit's own and the local hospital authorities — who were determined not to certify as fit for combat men who were broken physically and mentally.

General Stilwell was later reported to have been appalled at the overzealous interpretation given his instructions by his

subordinates. On this point I cannot testify. On one occasion when these subordinates succeeded in loading several hundred convalescents into trucks, the medical officers took after the convoy in Jeeps, intercepted it and forced it to return.

In the end, the doctors won. The pressure at Myitkyina was progressively relaxed, and thereafter no more wholesale movements of troops from the 5307th back to combat were attempted. And at long last, yielding to mounting pressure, the town fell. In the meantime, the 5307th had been totally wrecked.

The Reasons Why

IT HAPPENED that I was picked — I forgot why, but perhaps it was because I had been designated adjutant of the rest camp, for some reason — to write a report for the Army's morale division explaining what had happened.

I could testify from my own experience that it was impossible for men to make any kind of recovery when release from the hospital automatically meant return to combat while they were still suffering nervous and physical exhaustion. I found myself with a strange debility that sometimes made me feel I could not get out of my chair. It was like being drugged. It could not be explained by the cut in my heels, which had largely been cured, or by the malaria from which I had just recovered, and I concluded it must be mental, the result of the all pervasive fear of being sent to Myitkyina.

The only thing to do — for the frightening ailment seemed to be growing — was to take the bull by the horns. So I got myself flown to Myitkyina — and was sent back again by Colonel Osborne, who said his purpose was to get the 5307th out of the place, not reassembled there. (The Myitkyina airfield, surrounded by trenches and red, green, blue and white nylon supply-drop parachutes strung up as tents, resembled a fair grounds in hell).

That was only part of it, however. To begin with, the 5307th was a volatile compound. What had held it together through the long campaign was danger, isolation, and impatience to get a detested job done. Toward the end, it kept going on promises, first the promise of a respite after Nhpum Ga, then the promise of a comfortable rest camp with real shower baths after Myitkyina. The default on the first promise left an ineradicable mark. The results of the second did not matter so much. The rest camp turned out to consist of mud-floored huts surrounding a few overgrown cow pastures, and the showers were two old oil drums and some lengths of rusty pipe that were dumped off the back

of a truck one day with the injunction that we could make anything we wanted to out of them. It was merely annoying to reflect that the base-area troops a few miles away, who had yet to spend a night out of their beds, had finished, concrete shower-stalls which no one had suggested they share with us. The effect was more serious when some of our early evacuees who had been on furlough brought back stories of electric fans and refrigerators that rear-echelon officers at New Delhi had abstracted out of the supply line for their offices or even private use — which explained why our sick and injured had in many cases to swelter in airless wards without cold drinks.

Above all, when I wrote the report, my mind went back to an observation made by Tom Senff, the officer beside whom I had stood at our first formation. On this last occasion we were watching the column trudging into a bivouac area one evening on the way to Myitkyina. The way the men looked, they made you think of gaunt-faced, fanatic-eyed, and for the most part bearded Indian holy men.

"They look as if it were the end of war for them, don't they?" he said. "But, you know, all they need is a pat on the back, a little recognition of what they've done — maybe a parade — and they'd be back in here next season ready to do it all over again."

What happened was just the opposite. At the end, they were made to feel inadequate and shamed.

Many swallowed their feelings — and many did not. With the first general releases from the hospital, the building where the men's private belongings had been stored was ransacked and the contents either stolen or destroyed in sheer wanton violence. The signs of demoralization multiplied. The rest camp, as it filled up, was little better than a shables and at night was enlivened by gunfire — for no one had seen fit to challenge the men on the retention of their side arms. Almost all the unit's officers were either at Myitkyina or in the hospital, and the policy of the local MP's was — wisely, I think — to keep out of the way as much as possible. Back pay and stolen articles were converted into beer or, which was much worse, a product of the Assam Distilleries labelled, "Bull Fight Brandy," which had been proscribed by the military authorities because it turned men into maniacs who would as soon assault an officer as look at him. (I had myself to swing a chair at two of them who were trying to demolish the little Red Cross building one night.)

Work details were impossible at assembly and discipline impossible to enforce;

there was nothing with which to threaten the rebellious except the guardhouse, and this would have appealed to most of them as a luxurious alternative to Burma. AWOL's were wholesale, and as furloughs began to be granted, the MP's in Calcutta had their hands full. Those in the rest camp lived like bands of castaway pirates, gambling and pitching empty beer cans out the windows. Inspecting officers arrived from various echelons and went away with pursed lips. However, either for reasons of pity or apprehension, no effort was made to impose discipline from the outside. I doubt very much if it could have been done.

Thievery was rampant, in fact was one of the worst problems. In an innocent effort to combat it by stimulating the organization's pride, I procured a two-foot square of sheet metal and some oil paints from an ordnance depot and spent a couple of days laboriously constructing a large replica of our dramatic and colorful insignia. This insignia, which local Indian tailors were beginning to reproduce for us on shoulder-patches, was one by which we set particular store since we had designed and conferred it upon ourselves (no one else had appeared likely to confer one upon us). I hung my handiwork from a telephone pole outside the orderly room. All day, as word of the ornament spread, groups of soldiers came to gaze upon it and stop by to express their extravagant admiration of it. It was stolen the first night and never recovered.

No doubt with General Merrill's recovery and the return of Colonel Hunter from Myitkyina, the 5307th could have been pulled back together again — with an effort. But by then a new regulation had been issued by the Army authorizing the return to the United States of all those with over two years' foreign duty. This applied to two-thirds of the 5307th's strength. Of the remainder, those who were still fit were incorporated in a larger force that, the following winter, was to complete the task the Marauders had begun and reach the Burma Road. I myself was ordered back to the United States for another kind of duty.

THE 5307th COMPOSITE Unit (Provisional) never even had a final formation. It simply trickled away. But before then, we had our moment. At the high point of our delinquencies the Distinguished Unit Citation was bestowed upon us from Washington. The order read:

After a series of successful engagements in the Hukawng and Mogaung Valleys of North Burma in March and April 1944, the unit was called on to lead a march over jungle trails through extremely difficult mountain terrain against stubborn re-

sistance in a surprise attack on Myitkyina.

The unit proved equal to its task and after a brilliant operation of 15 May 1944 seized the airfield at Myitkyina, an operation of great tactical importance in the campaign, and assisted in the capture of the town of Myitkyina on 5 August 1944.

As far as we were concerned, the Army had made it up to us.

When I left, carrying in a suitcase what remained unfilched of my possessions, there appeared to be nobody around to say good-by to, except a lieutenant outside the orderly room. I think it must have been young Caldwell of Tennessee, for I seem to recall that he wore the broad-brimmed, flat-crowned hat Caldwell had found in a bazaar and habitually wore with the courtliness of a Southern planter. I seem also to recall that the wave of the hand with which he indicated the area of the camp was languid and majestic, in the Caldwellian manner.

"The time will come," he observed, "when you will feel you were with the Green Mountain Boys and Mad Anthony Wayne's Indian fighters and Morgan's Raiders. And being as big an idiot as I am, you will wonder how anyone as fearful and unworthy as you could have been included in such a glorious company."

Young Caldwell was wise beyond his years. —THE END.

Anyone who has served with the Chinese knows of their great curiosity. One day, during the arrival of our mail, there were three Chinese officers in our office, one of whom was a major. M/Sgt. Leo Welsch, an old-timer who had served a hitch in the medical corps before the war, opened his first letter which was written on the usual thin air mail paper. As he started reading it, the Chinese major looked over Leo's shoulder and attempted to read it also. The Chinese knew very little if any English. Leo started to mumble and gripe about the curious friend over his shoulder when he turned the first page and found the second blank. When the first page had been torn from the pad, a second piece came with it. Leo kept apparently reading the blank sheet with his head going back and forth following the imaginary lines. The Chinese major was confused! He stood it as long as he could, then grabbed the blank sheet from Leo's hands, took it out on the porch and, with the other Chinese officers, examined it thoroughly with much conversation in Chinese. Disgusted, he brought it back and threw it on the table, walked out the door muttering about the crazy Americans. —CHARLES CUNNINGHAM, M.D., Vineland, N. J.

BOOK REVIEWS



Edited by **BOYD SINCLAIR**

THE LAST PARALLEL. By Martin Russ. 333 pages. Rinehart and Company, New York, 1957. \$3.95.

Diary of a 21-year-old Marine kept during training at Camp Pendleton and combat days in Korea with the First Marine Division. The author has been compared to Stephen Crane and Rudyard Kipling by competent critics.

FROM THE BACK STREETS OF BENGAL. By Bernard Llewellyn. 286 pages. Transatlantic Arts, Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Florida, 1956. \$5.

An Englishman's travels among and work with underprivileged people of India. Some of his stay was spent in service with the Society of Friends (Quakers) at Dacca, Pakistan. He is author of *I Left My Roots in China*.

GIVE US THIS DAY. By Sidney Stewart. 254 pages. W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1957. \$3.50.

An American enlisted man's story of his three years as a prisoner of the Japanese after his capture at Bataan. More than 100,000 copies have been sold in France, where the author has lived since 1948. An unforgettable story.

PACIFIC ORDEAL. By Kenneth Ainslie. 251 pages. W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1956. \$3.75.

Story of the hardships encountered by a tug which towed four minesweepers from Panama to Manila in 1947. A nine-thousand-mile voyage turned out to be a fourteen-thousand-mile cruise of hard luck over a period of seven months.

ZONE OF EMPTINESS. By Hiroshi Noma. 318 pages. World Publishing Company, Cleveland, 1956. \$3.95.

A novel of Japanese army life during World War II, first translated from the Japanese into French, and then into English from the French. It is a story without heroes or heroism, a tale of cruelty, injustice, and corruption.

ECHO OF A BOMB. By Mark Derby. 246 pages. The Viking Press, New York, 1957. \$3.

Suspense novel of a photographer who flies to Jakarta to track down the assassin of a friend. The assassin turns out to be a beautiful woman, and the photographer

finds that he loves her. Locale: Singapore to Jakarta.

THE MAGSAYSAY STORY. By Carlos Romulo and Marvin Gray. 316 pages. The John Day Company, New York, 1956. \$5.

A biography of the president of the Republic of the Philippines which focuses on his effective leadership against Communism in the Philippines and his emergence as an important Asian statesman.

AND THE RAIN MY DRINK. By Han Suyin. 319 pages. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1956. \$4.

Narrative (in a form resembling fiction) of the author's experiences as a doctor in the Malay Peninsula. In it you find Chinese informers, British police and administrators, Communist guerillas, and Malayan and Chinese businessmen.

SNOW COUNTRY. By Yasunari Kawabata. 175 pages. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957. \$1.25.

The Japanese novelist tells in *Snow Country* the love of a mountain geisha and a wealthy, jaded dabbler in art and sensuality. The book is paper-bound. Translated by Edward G. Seidensticker from the Japanese.

ON CLIMBING. By Charles Evans. 191 pages. A. S. Barnes and Company, New York, 1956. \$5.

Accounts of mountain-climbing in the Himalayas and elsewhere. The author, a leading mountaineer of our day and member of the team that scaled Everest, blends recollection and practical advice for the novice and experienced climber.

PAPER CHASE By John Kennedy. 174 pages. Abelard-Schuman, New York, 1956. \$2.75.

A mystery story set in Manila. Pat Ames, the owner of a lumber camp, marries a girl he has known only one day. He then becomes involved in a murder and an international plot. Suspense type fiction.

THE COMPLETE GUIDE FOR THE SERVICEMAN'S WIFE. By Carroll Glines and Elizabeth Land. 480 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1956. \$5.

Information for wives of officers and enlisted men. Based on a course for ROTC wives at the University of Oklahoma and a *Saturday Evening Post* article which created interest among servicewives.

A YEAR OF FLOWERS. By Rachel E. Carr. 128 pages. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, 1956. \$2.

This book is in effect a Japanese flower arrangement calendar and a visual guide to the Japanese flower arrangement art. Has 36 double-tone and 10 full-color photographs.

Date at Firpo's

● Am an ex-WAC, stationed at Hastings Mill. Mary Winkle of Albuquerque gave me Roundups for the past two years when I stopped there last December. Am married to a former T/Sgt. of the 508th Port Battalion, who was stationed at Tollygunge . . . The description of your tour to India (Jan. to Apr. 1956) was wonderful. Could almost imagine we were back in Calcutta. My husband and I had our first date at Firpo's. Received my engagement ring at the Great Eastern Hotel while having dinner with another couple who also met and became engaged while in Calcutta: Bernice Waddoups and Arthur Thomas.

Mrs. PATRICIA MORGAN, Escondido, Calif.

51st Air Service Group

● Have just located an old buddy from the 51st Air Service Group, Calvin K. McClintic, LaPaz Hotel, Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic. Mac was the P.O.L. officer at Mohanbari airfield and is now manager of this brand new hotel.

CHAS. L. WOODWARD, Coldwater, Mich.



MEN OF THE 330th Engineers pulling sections of a Bailey Bridge out of river which was washed out by flood waters. Photo at Warazup by U.S. Army.

Technical Rep.

● Was in the CBI for two years as a Bendix Stromberg carburetor technical representative. Sure appreciate getting the magazine each month. Also looking forward to the CBI convention at Detroit this summer. Would like to hear from some of the other technical representatives that were in the Theater.

MICHAEL DENACHUCK, Jackson, Mich.

Ex-Marauder Joins

● Ten years of my life has gone by and I'm just finding out that there is such a fine magazine as Ex-CBI Roundup. As an ex-Merrill's Marauder I just ran across a copy and must have more! The copy I have is May 1956 and not a day has gone by without me picking it up and running through it again. Please, by all means, enter my subscription.

RICHARD H. POPPE, Loveland, Ohio.

Shoulder Patches, 35c

● In the February issue an inquiry was made by Major Montoya as to where CBI shoulder patches can be purchased. They may be bought for 35c each from the United Surplus Stores, 208 E. Broad, Richmond 19, Va.

JOHN N. TOMICH, Summit, Ill.

Detachment 101

● Roundup brings home to me a feeling of my having been somewhere when you refer to the various towns and cities in India and Burma. Was with Detachment 101 and it has often been my desire to revisit Bhamo and Myitkyina where I knew many of the natives.

EDWARD PENDERGAST, Cleveland Hts., Ohio



RICKSHAWS ALWAYS stood in readiness at the ARC Burra Club in Calcutta. Here most CBI vets will remember Cy Anderson, Trudy Richards and "Pop" Foster who did a remarkable job of maintaining the club for over three years. Photo by Ed Belford.

Detroit Ready for

10th Annual Reunion

NEVER BEFORE has Roundup received so many inquiries concerning a coming CBI Reunion as we have this year. And small wonder, for the 10th Annual CBI Veterans Reunion scheduled at Detroit, August 8, 9, 10, 11, promises to be an outstanding affair in our lives.

The newly-decorated, modern Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel will be Headquarters for the Reunion. Rates for CBI-ers will be \$7 single; \$10 double; \$12 double with twin beds; a 25 percent discount on suites. Children under 14 are free, and cots and cribs will be furnished free of charge. So bring the kiddies along.

Bill Martienssen, 4341 Somerset, Detroit 24, Mich., is Chairman of Housing and all reservations should be sent to him—sooner the better.

While the final program is not yet completed, these are some of the events you may look forward to: a tour through an auto plant, to see Plymouth cars assembled; the old standby tour through a brewery, followed by suds-sipping; a trip to famous Greenfield Village and Windsor, Ontario.

There'll be much more, all to be announced later.

Door and Contest prizes will be in abundance.

Detroit — as everyone knows — is the world capital of mass production and industrial know-how. On a per capita basis, no other major city has so many factory workers or as large a volume of manu-



THE SHERATON-CADILLAC Hotel, headquarters for the 1957 CBI Reunion at Detroit.

factured products. Detroit's 6,100 factories create over 4 per cent of the U. S. total of values added by manufacturing. You'll see much of this in action as you arrive in the Motor City.

As a CBI veteran, you may be surprised to know that during World War II the Detroit area produced more war materials than any other area in the world. That truck or jeep you drove, the gun you fired, and even parts for the airplanes you flew were manufactured here.

In Detroit you can watch your favorite car being built, take a ten-minute walk or a 15c bus ride to foreign soil, visit world famous museums and playgrounds. All this you can do in conjunction with your visit as a delegate to the 10th Annual Reunion.

You'll read more about the coming Reunion in next issue. In the meantime, remember the dates and plan to attend this year. You'll never regret it!

If you have any questions concerning transportation, housing, or the city of Detroit itself, drop a line to Bill Martienssen.

—THE END.



MODERN DECOR and functionalism keynote the re-decorated lobby of the Sheraton-Cadillac, Detroit's largest and finest hotel.



The Sheraton-Cadillac is proud to be your host for the 10th Annual CBI Reunion. You'll like Detroit and you'll enjoy your stay at the Sheraton-Cadillac . . . long the headquarters in Detroit for social, civic and industrial activity. A recent three million dollar renovation program has transformed our thirty floors into pictures of beauty and comfort.

Food service par excellence is available in the elegant surroundings of the Book Casino and in the Town Room, where moderate prices prevail for breakfast, luncheon and dinner.

Bar service is available in all dining rooms, as well as the Casino Lounge, Parade Bar and Motor Bar, where there is dancing nightly except Sunday.

SHERATON-CADILLAC HOTEL



Conveniently located on prominent Washington Boulevard— in the heart of downtown Detroit—the air conditioned Sheraton-Cadillac is surrounded by the theater and business districts, shopping area and airline terminals.

'Dog Sugar Eight'

● After reading Malcolm Rosholt's story, "Death Lands at Dog Sugar Eight" (Mar.) I was shocked at the similarity to this incident and one I experienced. In late Dec. 1944, I was radio operator on a B-24 of the 7th Bomb Group, hauling gas to Suichuan, China. For about the last 2 or 3 hours of our flight I listened to the constant conversation between a lost fighter called "Midnight" and the base at Suichuan. He, too, like Detroit Red Leader, was lost and sweating gas. He was given a bearing every few minutes. In the meantime we landed after dusk by blind let-down procedure through a cloud layer with tops at 10,000 feet and ceiling of less than 1,000 feet. I was so relieved to get down safely I momentarily forgot about our lost friend. On the way in from the field we saw a flare shot up at the strip and the driver of our weapons carrier said, "It must be for that fighter that's been lost all afternoon." Right after the flare we saw the lights of the lost fighter break through the clouds but out of line with the runway. Immediately he climbed and turned to try again. Just before the



COL. JOHN H. STODTER, Commander of the 11th Army Group; Brig. Gen. Frank Dorn and Maj. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer making plans for their next drive in the China Theater. U. S. Army.

final approach the lights began to fall and disappeared into a dull flash. Apparently he had run out of gas a few seconds too soon. It really was tragic after bringing him all the way home only to crash so close to safety.

DALE STROHBEHN,
Council Bluffs, Ia.

'Assam Air Lines'

● Am sending you some photos of the 1337th AAF BU. As a matter of information, the 1337th was located at Sookerating in the

extreme Northeast corner of Assam. For that reason we operated the Assam Air Lines. The airline consisted of one DC-3 which made one round trip daily up and down the Assam Valley, making stops at each of the seven air bases in Assam. As a side line, the base made about 100 round trips over The Hump daily in C-46's, but the well-shined, brightly-painted DC-3 was our pride.

MILLARD A. WEBB,
Dimmitt, Texas.

Houston Basha

● The William Bates McDonald (Houston) Basha held their monthly meeting at Steve's Westerner in Houston. Members and their families had a barbecue dinner which was followed by a brief business meeting.

SIDNEY R. ERSLER,
Houston, Texas

Wants Police Figurines

● I have a collection of policeman figures from all over the world and have nothing to show from my years in CBI. Am interested in buying figurines of policemen of India, Burma and China. Can anyone help?

EUGENE BERNSTEIN,
813 Eaton Road,
Drexel Hill, Pa.



GENERAL PICK leading the first convoy to China over the Ledo Road, approaching the bridge over the Salween River. Photo by Wm. R. Moerk.

MONSOON PARADE

From The Calcutta Statesman

By M. Krishnan

THE DOWNPOUR that drove me to the *pan* shop at the corner has now declined to an almost imperceptible drizzle, but I stay on beneath the sheltering canvas awning for a chat with the shopman. And as I discuss life idly with him over a rather stale cigarette he offers, I notice the Monsoon Parade at the rickshaw stand across the road.

Beneath the lordly banyan that spreads its canopy over the stand are three rickshaws and half a dozen men. The rickshaws have their hoods up, and have all been turned to face away from the slant of the rain. The men are bare-bodied (all except Muniyandi who wears a gaily-checked waistcoat, in unbuttoned abandon) and wear brief shorts, or else have tied their dhotis tight around the loins, leaving the legs clear.

In summer these rickshaw pullers (I know them all, though I do not patronize their vehicles), go in for vivid slack-shirts, or more formally decorative crochet-work slips, but they know the wisdom of having the minimum possible clothing on during the monsoon. Wet clothes lead to chills and stiff aches, and the bare skin is easily dried and retains little moisture. That is why they wear nothing above the waist and are so careful to tuck up their loin clothes, but on their heads are displayed the most amazing assortment of hats and caps one ever saw anywhere.

Muniyandi (he of the patterned waistcoat) sports an olive-green felt with a snap-brim and a round little crown—three curvaceous plumes stick out of its narrow band. That hat must once have graced a fairer head, and I suspect that it was then a pure, rich green and that its feathers, now a livid purple, were then ultramarine. Muniyandi, who has the long legs of a runner, is a bit of a dandy and (if rumor can be trusted) a bit of a Lothario. He has pulled the brim of his hat low over one eye at a rakish angle, and looks self-consciously at me out of the other, his three plumes nodding in a faint breeze.

Pride of the head-gear must go, however, to old Peria Perumal, who once served a doughty Colonel of the Indian Army, a man known by the name of "Kernel Bubbincken." I once wrote a brief but colorful biographical sketch of Col. B. B. Babbington for a magazine, based on P.P.'s

reminiscences and my own imagination, but on the trusting editor asking for a fuller account of this remarkable character, I withdrew the sketch. Peria Perumal is now fallen on evil days and become a rickshaw-puller, but he can never forget that he was once associated with the redoubtable Kernel, and holds himself aloof. He wears a pair of wrinkled, rope-soled canvas shoes at the stand (these insignia of superiority are invariably removed when he gets a customer, perhaps because they are two sizes too large for him) and when the weather warrants it, he dons the great helmet presented to him by his late master.

One look at this helmet will convince you that P.P. did, in fact, belong to the age of supermen, and that there is probably some truth in his tales of Kernel Bubbincken. It is no more solatopee, a boosted-up affair of airy pith and flimsy drill that a passing shower can soak and wreck, but a real cork helmet, reinforced with iron to judge its composition by its weight and wear. P.P. has had it for 18 years now and it is still going strong. The khaki of its gabardine covering and pugree has been dyed a dark brown by time and the cork within, but it is solid still, absolutely waterproof. Such things, alas, are made no longer.

Pattaalam's headpiece looks equally distinguished, though it is by its soft, sinister amorphism that it achieves distinction. It belongs so much to the past that the younger generation may not even know it by its name—it is a Balacava cap of slate-grey wool, with a little round, bobbing tassel on top, of small use in heavy rain, but serving to lend mystery and romance to its wearer. A powerfully-built man of coal-black complexion, Pattaalam in his cap looks very like one of those men of iron one sees in the comic strips, grey-masked, inscrutable, inexorable. Only, I know Pattaalam and that spoils the whole impression for I know what a soft-hearted chap he is.

Iyem Perumal wears a barlequin cricket cap, and Ezhumalai affects a straw hat that would undoubtedly look nattier if its brim were intact. And so it goes, with each rickshaw-puller sporting his own distinctive crowning glory.

As I go home through the fine drizzle, my thin-thatched top exposed to wind and weather, I wonder if I, too, should not get myself something to keep the rain off my head. But what can I get myself? Every man goes by deep-rooted preferences in such highly personal matters as headwear, and I cannot imagine myself stooping to anything lower than a solid cork helmet, such as the one old Peria Perumal has, though, of course, I should like mine newer. And where are such helmets to be had these degenerate days? —THE END

Cooking With The Chinese Flavor

CHINESE RESTAURANTS were common in India, as well as China, during the war. In the small cities and towns of Upper Assam, those delightful Chinese restaurants were the only means of buying a meal away from base.

It was there—in wartime India and China that many of us tasted Chinese food for the first time and we've been eating it, off and on, since.

If you like Chinese food—and who doesn't!—you'll appreciate a new book recently published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., entitled "Cooking With The Chinese Flavor," by Tsuifeng Lin and Hsiangju Lin.

The book, which costs only \$3.95 at your local book store, is not only full of exotic Chinese recipes, but the authors go to great length to tell you how to prepare these tasty dishes to appetizing effect.

By special permission of the publishers, we have selected several of these easily-prepared recipes for reproduction in Roundup. Try these, and, if you like them, there are dozens more in this unusual book:

Crabmeat Souffle

Flake

1 lb. (about 2 cups) crabmeat

Beat together, setting aside the whites

6 egg yolks

½ cup milk

Chop fine and set aside

¼ lb. ham

Chop fine

3 stalks scallions, or 1 small white onion

Sauté the scallions over low heat for 1 minute in

½ cup salad oil

While the scallions are still bright green stir in

5 tablespoons flour

When the flour mixture is smooth slowly add

1½ cups milk

Stir constantly over low heat until the mixture is hot. Add the ham and the crabmeat and heat for 1 minute to permit the flavors to blend. Season with

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper or curry

Add if desired

2 teaspoons sherry

When the above ingredients are blended add the egg yolks, pouring in a thin stream with constant stirring. Maintain

very low heat and stir for about 10 minutes, to permit yolks to thicken. When the sauce thickens remove it from heat immediately. Cool.

Beat the egg whites with

¼ teaspoon salt

Fold them into the crabmeat mixture. Bake for about 55 minutes in a moderate oven (325° F.).

A trick here is to use low heat during the mixing of the ingredients, so that the flavor of the crabmeat is not destroyed. Serves 6.

If you aren't crazy about seafood, there are many unusual meat recipes in the book. Here's one we found to be very good:

Minced Pork

Meat is more tender when chopped by hand than when ground by a machine. Chop (or put through a meat grinder)

1½ lbs. lean pork

½ cup celery

1 stalk scallion

When the meat is finely ground add

¾ teaspoon salt, or a tablespoon soy sauce

Sauté the meat in a very hot skillet with 1 tablespoon oil

Stir constantly. After 2 or 3 minutes add

1 tablespoon sherry, or whiskey

Stir and mix until the meat is brown and the liquid has been absorbed, and serve immediately. The pork should still be somewhat moist.

With pork serve

whole lettuce leaves, washed and drained

A small portion of the pork is placed on a lettuce leaf, and the leaf rolled up like a filled pancake. A good combination, since the rich pork filling contrasts with the crisp lettuce. Serves 3.

Here's a simple recipe our curiosity caused us to try, and we thought the result a delicious treat. See what you think of it:

Tea Leaf Eggs

Boil

3 cups water

Place in a pot

3 tablespoons red Ceylon tea

Add the boiling water, cover and let stand for 10 minutes. Soft boil eggs

for 4 minutes. Drain. Crack the shells by gently rolling and pressing the eggs on a board. Heat the tea to boiling and place the cracked eggs in it. Cover and cook for about 15 minutes. Drain, cool and shell the eggs. —THE END.

The Garos of Assam

From *The Calcutta Statesman*

By J. D. Baveja

A HUNDRED MILES southwest of Gauhati lie the beautiful and green Garo Hills. An offshoot of the early Tibetans, the Garos have made these hills their home since time immemorial.

Short and stocky, the Garos are a very friendly people, with traditions of peace and extreme courtesy. When I visited the Garo Hills recently, the area was soaked by rain. The muddy roads were full of pools of rainwater, through which our bus had to wade. While the journey from Gauhati to Goalpara is comfortable, the ordeal begins after about eight miles from Goalpara, when the bus has to say good-bye to the metal road!

Landslides on this route are common and sometimes for days the world does not exist for the Garo Hills.

The Garos are an agricultural tribe. On both sides of the road, one can see the well-laid out Jhun lands with Borangs fixed on the trees. Borang is a tree-top house constructed by a Garo farmer to look after his fields as well as to protect himself from wild animals. Almost every

Garo has two houses—one in the village and the other in the field. The Borangs look very picturesque from a distance. One can almost mistake them for large nests. The Garos use ordinary bamboo staircases to get to the top of the tree.

They live in very clean and planned villages. Though their thatched cottages are not very wide, they are of considerable length. There are separate rooms for paddy, farming implements and living.

It is a great treat to visit a Garo village in the evening. The villagers, after a long day of labor in the fields, are very happy men and quite easy to talk to. Liquor is brought into full use then to relieve the tired bodies. The Garos are a musical tribe and a few of the village boys get together and sing the songs of their past glory.

The Garos have no written history. It is through the medium of songs that they still know the story of their origin. According to Garo belief, their forefathers came from the holy land of Tibet, from where they had to migrate due to economic reasons. Historians believe this story, for no tribe in Assam attaches so much importance to the tails of yaks as the Garos. It is interesting to note that no yaks are found in the Garo Hills. These tails are purchased from the Tibetans and Bhutias who come to Assam in the cold weather to do business. These tails are tied with swords and other war implements of the Garos.

The tribe also claims some sort of relationship with the Nagas. Mutual love and fear of tigers is the only common feature of their culture.

Though the Garos are not a head-hunting tribe, the early British administrators did come across some signs of head-hunting among them. The Garos had to suffer a lot at the hands of the plains people in the initial stages of their arrival in the Garo Hills. Battles between the two were common; Garo warriors used to sever the heads of their enemies and, after exhibiting them in their villages, they hung them in the latrines as a mark of contempt.

Wangala is the most important festival in Garo land. It is celebrated in the months of September-October after harvesting.

The Garos follow the now vanishing system of matriarchal society. All property vests in women. But, unlike in the Khasi Hills, the women do not dominate day-to-day life; the men guard their freedom with a woman's jealousy. The institution of marriage is considered very sacred, but divorce is easy and cases are settled by the village elders and the parties concerned can be free after paying a fine!

—THE END.

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Commander's Message

by
Phil Packard
National Commander
China-Burma-India
Veterans Assn.

Salaams, Sahibs and Memsahibs:

Just a few more issues of Roundup and all roads start leading to Detroit. From reports coming out of the Motor City Basha, our "Family Reunion" in August will have many convention firsts. For one thing, many of you sahibs and memsahibs will go home with gifts. Two dozen people will be taking home some beautiful lamps and shades; a lucky person will stop the heat thanks to Chuck Mitchell who's providing an air-conditioning unit which some delegate will take home. There'll be many more door prizes. The Motor City Basha hopes that when the loot is counted most of the visitors will have some kind of remembrance of Michigan.

Another first now being worked on is a trip through a Canadian whiskey distillery. Free "Carew's Booze," "Snow White," and "Bamboo Juice." This may be a first and last!!

Two trips I'm truly looking forward to: The world famous Greenfield Village. This is Henry Ford's museum, visited by people from all over the world by the millions. I am told that nowhere in the world is there anything that compares to Greenfield Village.

I guess many of you, like myself, have wanted to see how automobiles are made and assembled. Well, friends, here's our chance—a trip through the Plymouth plant. This sounds thrilling.

The usual trip to the brewery awaits us, and I don't think one of our Reunions would be official without a beer trip.

Another original convention deal being worked on is a CBI Day at Briggs Stadium, the home of the Detroit Tigers ball team. During our stay the Cleveland Indians will be playing there and we hope to honor Hank Greenberg, an old CBI wallah currently general manager of the Indians.

So you can see a tremendous program is being arranged, something for everyone's liking. Again, gang, let's start saving the rupees, yen and nickels, we'll try to make this the biggest yet.

The streak buzzing through the state

of Ohio is not a tornado, just Winfield Burke and Wayne Keller, going like mad to just about every major city, getting new members, starting Bashas, and fighting like heck to bring the 1958 Reunion to Cincinnati. From reports I get, it's the Buckeye State in '58.

We sure would like to see more Burkes and Kellers come to the front throughout the country. The greater our membership, the better our chances to develop the many charitable ideas we have planned for the future. The \$3 per year dues will be repaid many times, knowing we have helped someone less fortunate than ourselves!

So, what say, gang, let's go all out! Just drop a note to our adjutant, Gene Brauer, 1849 N. 25th St., Milwaukee, Wis., for membership blanks and get your friends who were over there to get with us.

Remember the 1957 Reunion dates, August 8-11.

PHIL PACKARD,
National Commander,
180 E. 17th St.,
Brooklyn 26, N. Y.

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301st Officer Dead

● It is with heartfelt sorrow that I write to advise you of the death of Lt. Col. Fred R. Baer on Jan. 17th. Fred served with the 301st Air Service Group from the time it was formed at Selfridge Field until he came home on points in Dec. 1945. Everyone who knew him will miss him.

LOUIS SOLOMON,
Yonkers, N. Y.

Ledo Road Book

● I recently remembered the interest generated in the book, KAM A SUTRA during our work on The Ledo Road. Could anyone tell me how I might purchase a copy of this book?

W. W. CORMAN,
2225 Greenleaf,
Allentown, Pa.

Story Contest

● The story-writing contest is a good idea. Why not publish in each issue a list of the articles or stories which are eligible for the contest?

ALBERT T. WILLIS,
New Bern, N.C.

All articles published in Roundup from January to December 1957 are eligible.
—Ed.



COW PATTIES are being custom-made by enterprising young girl just off Karaya Road in Calcutta. "Oil for the lamps of China" would have been a good caption in Kunming, but in Calcutta the line would be different. Photo by Ed Belford.



GENERAL PICK entering the West Gate at Kunming with the entire personnel of the first convoy to China over the Ledo Road. Photo by Wm. F. Moerk.

China Walk-Out

● Please send your fine magazine to Dwight Collins . . . he was a radioman on a B-29, shot down in China and had to walk out from behind Jap lines.

JACK FOSTER,
Spokane, Wash.

Last CBI Battle

● I have a photo that will answer Bob Van Sant's inquiry in the Sept. 1956 issue about the last battle in CBI. I was one of the ten Engineers selected for the Ledo Road convoy from Calcutta to Kunming, and took a pic-

ture of a light tank group and Chinese soldiers fighting the last Jap artillery positions at Mong Yu, China, to close the final battle on record . . . The Feb. issue cover had a good shot of General Pick. His passing at this time will be a great loss to our nation.

WILLIAM MOERK,
Chicago, Ill.

'The Red Road'

● Sure enjoyed the story about "The Red Road" (Feb.) by Albert T. Willis. I recall the Japs had one company or battalion in a position and couldn't move, so our Battalion Commander volunteered to take the hill overlooking the Burma Road and we took it.

CARL (Wild Bill)
SANDERS,
Detroit, Mich.

20th Tac. Recon. Sq.

● Served with the 20th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, a part of the 8th Photo Recon. Group, as a reconnaissance pilot from April 1944 to June 1945. Stationed at Dinjan, Myitkyina, Tingkaw Sakan and finally on TD with the 8th Group's element at Akyab, whose designation I have forgotten.

JOHN J. KENDRICK,
Brownfield, Texas

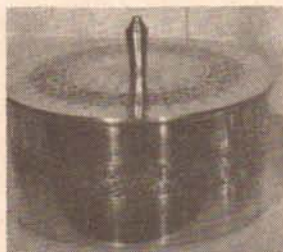
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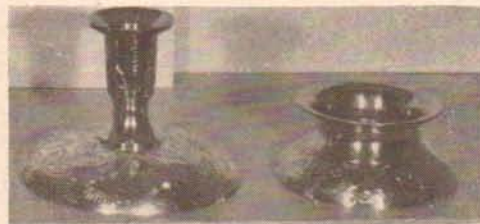
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